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ABSTRACT

Perspectives on creating an integrated college curriculum are presented in four papers. In "What is 'Higher' About Higher Education?" Harlan Cleveland suggests that colleges and universities should promote a global view and understanding of problems on society and international interdependence and should develop the capacity to analyze and integrate knowledge from academic disciplines and specialized training to help solve real-world problems. In "Curricular Integration: Mortar for the Ivory Tower," Mary Jim Joseph suggests that interdisciplinary courses and programs are a necessary but not sufficient provision in an overall curricular structure designed to assure integration. Skills development is a major tool of integration, and other options for creating curricular integration include integration within general education, majors, field study, and electives. In "Integrative General Education: The Saint Joseph's Model," John Nichols describes the development and implementation of a core curriculum at Saint Joseph's College, Indiana. The 45-credit program in general education was adopted in 1968 and is interdisciplinary, integrative, and team-taught. The content of the 10 cores and core objectives are identified. In "An Integrative Program for Building Skills: The City and the Self," Susan Gurewitsch describes an integrative program for freshmen at Albertus Magnus College, Connecticut, which is designed to build skills such as observation, synthesis, and problem-solving, along with reading and writing skills. A seminar in thought and expression and short courses in the humanities, social sciences, and natural science or mathematics are based on a student-centered approach, which involves lecture, discussion, and field work. (SW)

1981 Current Issues in Higher Education, No. 2

Creating an Integrated Curriculum— The 'Higher' in Higher Education

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Current Issues in Higher Education is based on topics addressed at the Conference. Selected papers presented at the Conference are included in the five monographs that make up the 1981 series. Several additional papers were prepared especially for publication here.

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What Is 'Higher' About Higher Education?

Harlan Cleveland

Higher education ought to be education for breadth, yet colleges and universities are lagging behind in recognizing and meeting the demand for individuals who can take an integrated, global view of the problems of industry and society.

Isaac Stern, the violinist and philosopher of music education, was once asked how it happened that all professional musicians could play the right notes in the right order, but some made beautiful music and some did not. "The important thing is not the notes," he replied. "It's the intervals between the notes."

That is not only a wise comment about music, it's a piece of fundamental wisdom about higher education. The important thing about any process is not its isolated components; what makes them dynamic is the connections between and among them, connections made by people who understand the whole system of which their own actions can only be a marginal part. In this spirit I will argue a still minority opinion, but an idea whose time, I believe, has come. I will argue, in sum, that what ought to be "higher" about higher education is no longer the most disciplined specializations but their interdependence. And that means making our colleges and universities centers for the broadest and most integrative thought.

I hasten to assure you that I think experts are indispensable. Some of my best friends are experts—and the teachers who make them possible. Expertise is not an endangered species; its remuneration, renown, and rewards all too readily survive integration with other specialized knowledge in government agencies, corporations, and other inclusive systems. But the limiting factor in the kind of civilization we call modern industrial democracy is no longer our capacity to delve ever deeper into the remotest corners of reality for original contributions to human knowledge. We have gotten very good indeed at doing that.

The factor that now limits our civilizing energies is our capacity to get it all together . . . to relate the parts to the whole . . . to see the interconnections among the disparate "facts" . . . to play the intervals as well as the notes. If our cities are congested and unsafe, if our economy works badly, if our science and technology produce unacceptable social fallout, if our national security is threatened by remote cartels and anonymous terrorists, that is not because we are short on analytical brainpower but because we are short on educated intuition.

The education of our intuition is what colleges and universities are *for*, or so it seems to me. But before I try to explain what I mean by educated intuition, maybe we had better understand each other about what the academy—that is, the professors and administrators and those who pay for the pleasure or at least the stimulation of our company—can do about the troubles our nation is heir to.

Our job is not to fix whatever's wrong with the real world. Our job is to try to understand it, and help others understand it, and thus increase the probability that we will be *able* to fix it, and that we will *want* to fix it.

But we have, let's face it, lost control of three of the four main factors that determine how well the academy prepares individuals for the real world. Lay outsiders, not the full-time professionals, now make the main decisions about how much money is invested in higher education, who gets access to the academy, and what vocations they should be prepared to follow when they graduate. But we (the professoriate) are still fully responsible for what students study, for what happens to the minds of those who do get in, before they get out. We are still able to define what's "higher" about "higher education."

But before tackling that task of definition, we had better look a little more closely at who makes what decisions about higher education.

Access vs. production

The Dr. Doolittle stories were favorites of my childhood reading, and as a university president I had occasion to recall that fabled creature called the Pushmi-Pullyu—the animal with a

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head at each end, so it was impossible to tell whether it was coming or going. In the modern era, the Pushmi-Pullyu has come to life—it's called the higher education system.

At one end of the system, called *access*, universities and colleges are pushed by the society around them, and by their own sense of fairness, to admit students to postsecondary studies without discrimination as to race, creed, sex, or prior exposure to the basic skills of computation and communication.

At the other end of the system, the university is pulled by the community that supports it to "produce" employable students who fit into somebody's idea of what jobs need to be filled. Predicting manpower requirements has to be the least scientific branch of that semi-science we call economics. Nevertheless, our mandate is deceptively clear: Students admitted on principles of equity are somehow to be arranged according to merit, certified according to intellectual achievement, and stacked in the hierarchical job market that awaits them off campus.

A national system of postsecondary education to which more than two-thirds of our high school students aspire obviously has to serve multiple purposes—education as an investment (for the poor), education as a consumer good (for the affluent), education as a device for avoiding decisions about what to do next (for the unattached, the uncertain, and the unemployed). But whatever the individual purpose of "going to college," the social contract in American higher education is plain enough: Colleges and universities are the egalitarian way to make an aristocracy of achievement acceptable in a democratic society. It is part of our democratic ethos that if you apply meritocratic judgments to a large enough crowd, the resulting discrimination is acceptable.

Both policies—entry by egalitarian principles and exit by meritocratic standards, as James Perkins expressed it long ago—are imposed on higher education's insiders (faculty, administrators, trustees) by outsiders (parents, patrons, politics, and the practical world of "downtown"). The outsiders' preconceptions, in turn, are reflected in the students' predilections: They want an equal chance at the beginning, and a preferential chance at an interesting job when they get through.

In the United States, the outside pressures have been mostly focused, so far, on entrance to, budgets for, and outcomes of the organized processes of higher learning. The *content* of that learning may be the next locus of the creative tension between educators and their sponsors/consumers.

Decisions about who gets into college, how much will be spent on them, and what awaits them when they emerge with "an education" are thus only marginally in the jurisdiction of professionals in the learning professions. But we *do* retain most of the control over what happens between registration and graduation. Whether we academics *can*, in the '80s, and '90s, continue to be effectively responsible for what is taught and learned inside the academy depends on how we resolve, for our time and place, the dilemmas about what should be learned that result from mixing egalitarian entry with meritocratic exit.

It would be nice if the uncertainties about what the academy should deliver could be worked out in an environment of expansion, making it possible to experiment with new kinds of learning without disturbing all the tenured forms of learning already built into the system. But the financial squeeze—the simultaneous budget crunch this year in governments, corporations, foundations, families, and students—intensifies all the old, genteel arguments between "training" and "education," between "vocational" and "general," between honing the mind and nourishing the soul, between training the analytical left side of the brain and educating its integrative, interconnective, intuitive right side.

A proliferation of options

The contemporary compromise between what everybody ought to know and what each vocation requires has been to "maximize the student's options," and thus create a bewildering cafeteria of proliferating courses and programs of study. That is just right for those students who know exactly what they want out of college and why they want it, but they have to be a very small minority of our student population. And even they typically leave the academy with little experience in problem solving, little training in integrative thinking, and little understanding of international interdependence. We have been content to multiply students' options, leaving to them the task of organizing our miscellany into a coherent sense of personal direction and social purpose.

The proliferation of options has surely gone far enough. Perhaps, in the alternating current of general and job-oriented education, it is time for a new synthesis, a new "core curriculum"—something very different from Columbia's World Civilization, Syracuse's Responsible Citizenship or Chicago's Great Books, yet still a central idea about what *every* educated person should know, or have, or try to be.

I don't think a new "core curriculum" can have much to do with facts that can be learned. If it is true that each 40 minutes produces enough new knowledge to fill a 24-volume edition of the *Encylopaedia Britannica*, if our world of indiscriminate erudition really turns out 450,000 books and 60 million pieces of literature in a year's time, most of the facts we learn in school are unlikely to be true for as long as we can remember them.

Some time ago, I suggested to a meeting of state universities and land-grant colleges a basis for a new "core curriculum" attuned to the main trends in post-industrial society and to the instincts and perceptions of our future-oriented students. I suggested four kinds of learning as central to the role of an educated person in our society:

- A capacity for self-analysis—through the study of ethnic heritage, religion and philosophy, art and literature, the

achievement of some fluency in answering the question, "Who am I?"

- Education about social goals, public purposes and the ethics of citizenship—to enable each "educated person" to answer for himself the question, "How do I avoid getting efficiently to where I will not want to be when I arrive?"

- Some practice in real-world negotiation, in the psychology of consultation, and in the nature of leadership in a horizontal society—because in our nobody-in-charge society, each of us is partly in charge.

- The rudimentary knowledge, the integrative tools, and above all the concern to feel a personal sense of responsibility for the situation as a whole. The management of population, food, energy, and resources has been revealed as a single issue. The "environment" is clearly a global as well as a local problem. Most of what we used to think of as "domestic" policy is now "international affairs" too. "Private" enterprise depends on and intervenes in public policy, and vice versa. The capacity of the human race to retain some control of its own destiny rests on whether literally millions of "educated" people prove capable of feeling that their individual actions must naturally transcend personal and parochial interests and achieve a workable consensus about general outcomes.

All these capacities require education in *integrative* brainwork—the capacity to synthesize for the solution of real-world problems the analytical methods and intuitive insights of academic disciplines and specialized expertise.

You will have guessed by now what I am getting at: The art and science of "getting it all together," the technology of integrative thinking, is what should be "higher" about "higher education."

If U.S. colleges and universities continue to proliferate courses, and resign their position in the judgment of what every educated citizen needs to be an effective leader in a few matters and an enlightened follower in many matters, governments and corporations and other external pressure groups will sooner or later impose social and economic, and even political, criteria for curriculum-building in higher education. If our only curricular principle is "maximum options," the outsiders will, in the end, tell the academics what to teach, in what order, to which categories of students.

But surely it is not beyond the reach of academic imagination for us to concentrate our thinking, and our students' options, on the development of those skills and aptitudes that our own reason and study tell us will be crucial to survival and beyond.

Remember: if we don't do it, others will do it for us, and to us.

Breadth and depth

For three centuries, then, we have bet on a system that defines higher education as deeper, narrower, more specialized education. Yet it is becoming uncomfortably obvious that what ought to be "higher" about higher education is education for breadth.

Breadth is a quality of mind, the capacity to relate "the facts" to a coherent theory, to fashion tactics that are part of a strategy, to act today in ways that are consistent with a studied view of the future.

Breadth is not a contradiction of depth, but its complement. No one person can know enough to put a man on the moon, in the sense that grandpa could know just about everything about managing his corner grocery store. So different kinds of people, with differing knowledge and skills and networks of friends and acquaintances, have to come together in organizations designed to transmute their separate expertnesses and their collective insights into wise decisions about real-world problems—which are all interdisciplinary, interdepartmental, interprofessional and (increasingly) international. And the priceless ingredient is this: Each of the participants in this complex choreography has to have some understanding of the *whole* scene in order to play a *relevant* bit part in the big complexity.

We start with a heavy bias against breadth. It's an open secret that the modern university is not well suited for the task of educating people to "get it all together." The university's self-image, its organization, and its reward systems all tilt against breadth.

The university as we know it developed as an expression of the scientific method, which progressed so well by dividing into separate compartments the different kinds of knowledge, and into separate disciplines the proven methods of inquiry. We still need the experts this kind of higher education is good at producing. We will need lots more of them.

But in my judgment we have an even greater need for what the modern university, by and large, is *not* producing—the analysts who can relate "hard" technologies to their "soft" impacts and implications; the reflective practitioners who are concerned with human values; the educators who can teach in global perspective; the managers who can bring their more specialized brothers and sisters into organizations to make something different happen; the legislators who can relate all the policies they make to each other; in a word, the citizens and leaders who can think about the whole canvas while painting their own corner of it.

Evidence that university education for integrative, holistic thinking is lagging behind the demand curve is plain enough. Think-tanks for "policy-analysis," "systems analysis," "futures research," "integrative studies," "humanistic studies," "public-affairs," and other names for the get-it-all-together function are mushrooming as a new growth industry in themselves. In the second half of the 1970s, the same began to be true in Europe and Japan.

These think-tanks have lured out of the research universities and graduate schools an impressive number of first-rate academics who feel stifled by the obstacles and the absence of rewards in ranging beyond their own disciplines and teaming up with colleagues in other departments. Large corporations and government agencies, unable to find in universities the advanced integrative, interdisciplinary, interprofessional, and international re-education their specialty-trained mid-career executives both need and want, are commissioning independent institutes to fill the gap or creating very large educational and policy-analysis structures of their own, matching in size and overmatching in resources all but the major university graduate programs.

One trouble with this trend is that many of the free-standing think-tanks exist to push particular points of view, and the industrial research establishments (with a few notable exceptions such as Bell Labs) naturally tend to concentrate on issues most likely to be helpful to the corporations' own prosperity. The situation as a whole is thereby neglected.

Another trouble is that neither the think-tanks nor the industrial research labs do very much teaching; some of them don't do any. And the executive training schools typically focus sharply on the policies and problems of their parent corporations. Thus they are not in close contact, as universities are, with the development of younger potential leaders. They may contribute useful ideas to the adults who are currently, in Paul Appleby's memorable phrase, "making a mesh of things." But they are not helping to hone the fresh new integrative minds we are going to need to get through the 1980s and 1990s into the 21st century.

That's our job, isn't it? Well, isn't it?

The obstacles to integrative education

I do not underestimate the obstacles to integrative education in institutions built solidly on the values of disintegrative thinking. It is as true today as it was in the time of Niccolo Machiavelli that "there is nothing more difficult to carry out, nor more doubtful of success, nor more dangerous to handle, than to initiate a new order of things. For the reformer," Machiavelli went on, "has enemies in all those who profit by the old order, and only lukewarm defenders in all those who would profit by the new order, this lukewarmness arising partly from fear of their adversaries, who have the laws in their favour; and partly from the incredulity of mankind, who do not truly believe in anything new until they have had actual experience of it."

But in this case the implausible may turn out to be imperative. Adlai Stevenson said it best:

> *Democracy is not self-executing. We have to make it work, and to make it work we have to understand it. Sober thought and fearless criticism are impossible without critical thinkers and thinking critics . . . Democracy's need for wisdom will remain as perennial as its need for liberty. Not only eternal vigilance but unending self-examination must be the perennial price of liberty, because the work of self-government never ceases.*"

If we don't figure out, inside the academy, how to serve a society desperate for integrative thinking and dangerously short of get-it-all-together people, the community we are supposed to be serving will sooner or later tell us to get on with it. Wouldn't it be better if it were our idea, and we started now?

Curricular Integration: Mortar for the Ivory Tower

Mary Jim Josephs

Interdisciplinary courses don't necessarily provide integrative education, but they are one important tool for financially strapped institutions. Others include skills development courses, field study, and careful academic advising.

There is a new clamor rising up, both from the critics of higher education and from its supporters, for more attention to the integration of the components of a college education. We are coming to see that we toss bits and pieces to our students and look for them to construct an ivory tower without even a building plan to guide them. While it is true that each student has to build an individual tower, it is also true that we haven't supplied enough mortar amongst our bricks, that too many of the bricks are ones a curious student could find rummaging alone in a library, and that even the libraries don't supply the building plan unless we give more of a clue about where to look.

Interdisciplinary programs: the first response

The first response to the call for curricular integration in undergraduate education has been the creation of interdisciplinary programs: General education, core, or required courses; majors; senior capstone experiences; even the electives—each is expected not only to make its individual contribution to the student's education but also to provide internal links among the parts. The movement of general education is away from the distribution model—in which the student takes introductory courses in a number of disciplines—and towards a model of core courses that are interdisciplinary, at least within one of the three major divisions of the disciplines. In addition, most institutions have developed more interdisciplinary majors, including area studies (Latin American studies, Asian studies), thematic programs (women's studies, aging, ecology), and preprofessional programs (prelaw, premed). And senior capstone courses tend to be either interdisciplinary or at least intradisciplinary, building on and pulling together the various parts of the student's major.

Interdisciplinary programs, for a number of reasons, have been the easy response to the need for curricular integration. First of all, they remain financially possible in a time of diminished funding for higher education because they can be constructed largely out of existing resources—faculty, courses, libraries, laboratories, etc.—that continue to play their previous roles in the institution. Second, the interdisciplinary mode appeals to faculty because it allows them to venture into new territory from the safe base of their disciplinary training and experience; in the current poor academic economy, working with a new set of colleagues to develop courses and programs beyond one's discipline becomes an attractive option that fosters new teaching opportunities and intellectual growth. The third reason is more theoretical, more endemic to the nature of the institutions we have developed: As social problems have become more complex, rather than raise basic questions about the ways we have divided up knowledge, the academy has found it easier to say that if one discipline cannot do the job, two or more surely can.

But the next question is whether *interdisciplinary* necessarily means *integrative* and, beyond this preliminary consideration, whether provisions other than the now-traditional interdisciplinary courses are necessary to create an integrated educational structure, one in which the pieces fit together to make a solid foundation for an education both personally and socially useful. I will argue that interdisciplinary courses and programs are a necessary but not a sufficient provision in an overall curricular structure designed to assure integration.

As for the integrativeness of interdisciplinarity, it has certainly been our basic and most reliable tool. We have used the term "interdisciplinary" very loosely, however, to describe a range of levels of interinvolvement of two or more disciplines, going from the simple juxtaposition of disciplinary concepts, sometimes called multidisciplinary, to a transdisciplinary integration in which new axioms and paradigms are

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invented.* While not denying the usefulness of the various interdisciplinary approaches that have been developed, I feel that integration may too often have been left to the student and may not have come up to the teacher's expectations. Interdisciplinarity has not guaranteed integration of the curriculum. The time may have come for us to examine some alternative approaches to curricular integration.

Integration through skills development

The development of skills is one area offering many opportunities for curricular integration, yet it is an aspect of education on which institutions differ widely. The more prestigious institutions tend to assume, or to pretend, that there is little or no need to focus directly on the development of skills and that the only proper subject matter of higher education is "content," as defined within the standard academic disciplines. Since good teachers everywhere teach people rather than subject matter, however, skills development is integrated as needed in many more classrooms than the institutional catalogs would lead us to believe. The skills, or competencies, most frequently singled out for special focus can be divided into four categories:

- communication skills: oral, written; foreign language
- computational skills: mathematics, statistics, computer literacy
- interactional skills: group interaction, leadership, decision making, citizenship
- reflective skills: logic, critical thinking, problem analysis, values clarification, cultural awareness

Skills development is a major tool of integration because skills provide a solid foundation for understanding, for expressing, and even for creating connections between subject matters. Skills cannot be taught abstractly: To learn to write, one must write about something; to learn to interact effectively with a group, one must be in a group that has a task. Thus, courses with an emphasis on skills are frequently the student's first college experience with integrated subject matter and the first experience of courses with the double focus of process objectives and content objectives. Yet such courses are not interdisciplinary unless they are so apart from the skills component.

Although an explicit focus on the development of skills is most often found at the general-education level of the curriculum, there are exceptions. In a competency-based program like that at Alverno College, for example, every course at every level emphasizes the development of competencies, which constitute the basis for degree requirements. One of the most striking effects of the competency orientation of the Alverno curriculum is the integrative substructure it provides for the student's overall program. The student is able to relate an understanding of the implications that a scientific issue, for instance, holds for a sociological or philosophical problem of values, thus enriching and interconnecting her understanding of the three areas.

The program I teach in at Michigan State University uses a skills approach in the college-level requirements. The student's field of concentration is interdisciplinary and can have components from any college of the university (chosen, however, according to guidelines that are meant to assure depth and breadth in the field). The faculty felt that an integrative structure was necessary to support such a curriculum, and chose decision making as a key adult role to emphasize in the requirements. We developed a three-term sequence of required courses in what we considered to be the skills necessary to decision making: problem analysis, values in societal issues, and small-group interaction skills.

The implications . . . of Piaget's concept of integration are that a disciplinary major should have a sound integrating structure . . . that concepts should be carefully built up in linking relationships of greater and greater complexity; and that attention should be given to the progression of courses . . .

I will elaborate on just one of these courses, problem analysis, as an example of the integrative possibilities of such a sequence. The approach taken in the course is a comparison and contrast of the paradigms and perspectives of the academic disciplines, with applications made to individual, community, and national/international-level problems.

The course begins with the presentation of a basic approach to problems that provides a simple structure for understanding a situation, defining a problem, identifying alternative solutions, evaluating the alternatives, creating a plan of action, carrying out the plan, and evaluating the results. This approach lets students begin working on an individual problem (for example, planning a field of concentration in the unit's flexible model or working on ways to use their time more effectively) while they are learning, through class lectures, more strategies that can be used on the more and more complex problems they will work on as the course progresses. Each of the broad disciplinary divisions is presented: the natural sciences, the social sciences, the humanities. This presentation begins with the scientific method, going on to the modifications most frequently made by social scientists—distinguishing between behavioral and humanistic, quantitative and qualitative approaches—and to the approaches of the humanities—distinguishing between artistic problems and critical problems. Questions such as these chart the way:

*These terms and their various interpretations are best summarized in William V. Mayville, *Interdisciplinarity: The Mutable Paradigm*, AAHE-ERIC/Higher Education Research Report No. 9, 1978 (Washington, D.C.: American Association for Higher Education, 1978).

- What kinds of problems does the scientist (social scientist, humanist) deal with?
- How are problems formulated?
- How are data collected?
- What methods of data analysis are used?
- How are hypotheses, or potential solutions or responses, formulated?
- How are these tested?
- What is the role of theory in this field?
- What are the critical attitudes and perspectives most typical of people working in this field?

The students work in groups on more complex problems, such as upcoming local election issues: for example, a bottle bill requiring all beverages to be sold in returnable-deposit containers, a proposed changes in the drinking age, or a tax-cut initiative. In their final round, they work on national/international-level problems: saving our national parks, the creation of alternative energy sources, energy-saving home modifications, funding for the arts, or ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment. Each group divides up the research, shares, and analyzes it together. Each group member writes a separate analysis paper. The objectives of the course are to provide students with a broad range of strategies to apply to problems and to give them insight into the procedures, the commonalities, and the distinctions of the academic disciplines, thus providing a framework for the assimilation, integration, and uses of disciplinary material.

Other options for creating curricular integration

Integration in general education. Skills development courses offer one approach to general education, and much has been written on integration through interdisciplinary core programs. Yet one approach that can be used with the traditional distribution model of general education is simply careful advising. Faculty can encourage students to take concurrently courses that can readily be related; for example, ancient history with anthropology, American history with American political processes, or art with psychology.

Integration in majors. It is particularly limiting to see the integration of the major only in terms of interdisciplinary approaches. There are a number of other possibilities to create and reinforce integrative structures even within a major in a single discipline.

Survey courses frequently are used early in the student's disciplinary studies to give a sense of the size and configurations of the field and at the senior level to give a sense of place and importance to the facts, theories, and approaches the student has learned. Most disciplines have some major internal divisions: clinical versus experimental, theoretical versus applied, quantitative versus qualitative, literary versus linguistic, behavioral versus humanistic. The survey course helps to set up a structure of connections that can be fleshed out by teachers sensitive to the broader implications of their material and to how it fits in the larger picture of the discipline.

Within the student's major—and elsewhere in the curriculum, but it is easier for a faculty member to influence the major—it is important to strike a balance of teaching/learning styles: lecture courses, small seminar sections, project-oriented classes, discussion groups, independent and field study. Such a variety allows students to understand and broaden their repertoire of learning styles and to choose courses on the basis of better criteria. As an integrative strategy, a balance of styles allows students to use both the active and passive modes and to see how each can best serve their learning purposes.

Another concept of integration, one particularly useful to the creation of unity within a discipline, is Piaget's theory of how learning takes place through two basic processes. The first is substitution, a fairly simple process in which an inaccurate or immature idea is replaced by a more accurate one; philosophical, social, and psychological ideas, such as concepts about religion, magic, and right and wrong, tend to develop by this process. The other is a more complex process that Piaget calls integration, through which simple or immature ideas are combined to form more complex and sophisticated concepts of the world; logical and quantitative ideas usually develop in this way, through the inductive reasoning process whereby observation leads to generalizations or theories that explain ever broader planes of experience.

For Piaget, then, this integration is a progressive process, with each new level of understanding built on the preceding levels, not replacing earlier learning but, instead, giving it broader implications. A very important aspect of integration for Piaget is the notion that it solidifies the concepts joined in higher levels of comprehension, making the knowledge more permanent, more a part of the knower. Furthermore, for Piaget, integration implies not only a move toward greater abstraction, but also toward objectivity, reciprocity (the ability, both literally and figuratively, to perceive situations from different angles of vision), and relativity (the ability to see things within a meaningful and fitting context).

The implications, then, of Piaget's concept of integration are that a disciplinary major should have a sound integrating structure, probably beginning with broad survey courses; that concepts should be carefully built up in linking relationships of greater and greater complexity; and that attention should be given to the progression of courses available and to guiding the student's selection of courses in appropriate sequences.

Integration in field study. Field study, independent study, and senior capstone courses all share the objective of helping the student to integrate and use the material learned in a variety of courses. Field study, further, fosters another kind of integration, moving through and beyond the integration of theory and application to bridge the world of study and the

world of work. The ability to work with increasing independence is a significant sign of the integration of knowledge as well as of active and passive learning styles.

Integration in electives. Elective courses can greatly facilitate the task of integration. While such courses can be used to explore various areas of study before selecting a major, or to broaden the student's liberal education, they also can be used to strengthen the connective structure of the program through a wise choice—again requiring good academic advising—of bridging courses or ones that provide a supportive perspective on the major field. History, for instance, provides such a back-up to many fields—literature, political science, philosophy, and economics, to mention only the most obvious examples.

In developing, evaluating, and revising curricula we need to remind ourselves of the various kinds of integration we want to foster or even to assure: the integration of factual knowledge, of theory and practice, of active and passive modes, of analytic and synthetic processes, of contemplation and action. Finally, we want to provide students with models for functioning in the social and work world, yet maintaining ties to a world of continuing intellectual growth. We want to help them to build that ivory tower—their own, not exactly ours—a tower of strength in a wearying world; not a structure that will isolate them from the world but one to insulate them from timeliness when they need a respite, and to allow them to contemplate a life that would not be worth living otherwise.

Integrative General Education: The Saint Joseph's Model

John Nichols

Saint Joseph's College in Indiana enrolls its entire student body in a 45-credit, four-year Core Curriculum designed to provide integrative general education.

"Excuse me, Officer. I'm an academic. Where am I?" That is the caption on a *New Yorker* cartoon reproduced in a brochure announcing a conference on liberal education. The drawing shows a very distinguished and professorial looking individual accosting a policeman in what I presume is Times Square. (Where else would the *New Yorker* look for an example of modern civilization?) The conference staff was very perceptive to characterize their program with that cartoon. "Where am I?" indeed is a live question in American higher education.

This essay describes how Saint Joseph's College in Indiana has worked during the last 12 or so years to answer that question in a collegial, collaborative fashion. We did so by designing and implementing an ambitious Core Curriculum.

There were at Saint Joseph's College a number of very fortunate circumstances favoring this development—a manageable size of about 1,000 students; a largely (90 percent) residential population of students; a rural location with the result that almost all of the faculty are full-time and live within a three-mile radius of the college; a faculty that was very positively disposed toward working on collaborative projects; strong leadership among the faculty and from the administration; and a lot of ferment and rethinking within the Catholic Church in the aftermath of the Second Vatican Council. But the aptness of those circumstances didn't mean that the new Core program was instituted without struggle, without hard work, or without creative rethinking of "Where are we?" And that's the story I'd like to tell. . . .

To begin with, what we are talking about is a 45-credit program in general education spread over the eight semesters of the normal bachelor's program. Each segment of this Core is interdisciplinary in its approach, integrative in its task, and team-taught by faculty from a variety of academic departments. The central message in the very structure is that general education is not something to "get out of the way" before going on to the "real work" in the major, but rather that general education is at least as important as the major. The components of the Core Curriculum are these:

Freshmen:
Core 1—The Contemporary World (6 credits)
Core 2—The Roots of Western Civilization (6 credits)
Sophomores:
Core 3—The Christian Impact on Western Civilization (6 credits)
Core 4—The Modern World (6 credits)
Juniors:
Cores 5 and 6—Man in the Universe (2 × 3 credits)
Cores 7 and 8—Non-Western Studies (2 × 3 credits)
Seniors:
Core 9—Toward a Christian Humanism (6 credits)
Core 10—Christianity and the Human Situation (3 credits)

The mechanics of the Core program are structured in such a way as to respect both the interdisciplinary and the personalist dimensions of Core. The typical six-credit segment of Core involves four contact-hours per week: two hour-long lectures in the college auditorium that the entire freshman, sophomore, junior, or senior class attends, and two hour-long discussions in a group of about 18 students and one professor. What might at first seem to be an overly generous allocation of credit hours to the normal semester of Core—six credits for four contact-hours—is justified by the very large volume of reading and writing assigned in the program.

The roles of a faculty member in the two scheduled parts of Core are quite different. As a lecturer in the auditorium meetings, the professor takes the traditional role of an expert in commenting on a reading assignment or related topic. In the discussion session, however, the professor often has to assume the position of a co-learner, since the topic under discussion may well come out of a field of study that is not his or her area of specialization. The excitingly different types of

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faculty-to-faculty and student-to-faculty relationships this structure demands and favors have radically revitalized the academic community of Saint Joseph's.

Adoption of the Core Curriculum, 1968

A major motivation behind this college's change in its general education program—a change that went against the general pattern of change in academe in 1968 away from required courses—lies in the fact that a sizeable group of faculty were acutely aware of a contradiction between what they were actually doing in the classroom and what their goals and purposes claimed they were supposed to be doing to impart a liberal education to students. The following excerpt from the 1967-68 Curriculum Revision Committee says it very well (and I'll not change the sexist tone of the pronouns so that the "age" of the document will not be forgotten):

> *Finally, and perhaps most important, these courses [in the former distributional general education program] are usually taught by a specialist in the area in which the course is given. Nowhere does the student get, except incidentally from a few very exceptional teachers, a model of the liberally educated and concerned man in his teacher. We want the students to be liberally educated, and we confront them with a battery of specialists each operating in the isolated compartment of his own specialty. It is as though the liberally educated man had no incarnation. Somewhere along the line of general education the student should be able to experience educated men dealing with the problems educated men are supposed to be able to handle. He must learn that, although his teachers are indeed specialists in one field, they are interested and competent in the major fields of human concern, that they are in fact embodiments of what the College wants and expects him to be. He must learn by direct experience that liberally educated people can read and discourse with intelligence and pleasure in a wide variety of subjects and topics; and he should experience first-hand what this indefinable quality of the liberally educated and humane mind is. He must see that different individuals coming at a subject from different special backgrounds can bring to a variety of topics a variety of methods, insights and implications, and can communicate with each other.*

It was to remedy the defect diagnosed in the first part of that statement, and to work toward the ideal in the second part of it, that the faculty of Saint Joseph's adopted its new general education Core. But the process of change was, in some ways, a flagrant contradiction of the current management-by-objective "dogma" in that we did not sit down and draft detailed goals, objectives, activities, milestones, and time lines. Instead, we lobbied and argued and discussed and achieved solid consensus on just two rather general points: We definitely wanted a common academic experience for all of the students and for as many of the faculty as possible, and we would shift from the distributional model of general education to a thoroughly interdisciplinary and integrative one. That approach worked rather well for us, because the current list of objectives for Core enjoys practically unanimous faculty support, for these objectives have emerged out of our *doing* of Core from 1969 through 1976. "*Primum vivere, deinde philosophare*"—"Let your theories grow out of your experience"—is still good advice.

But that's not the whole picture. There were two main reasons this approach worked for us. First, we were able to borrow tested structures from Florida Presbyterian College (now Eckerd College) and simply "fine tune" them to fit our faculty, our students, and our mission. And second, once the structures of the new program were set, the Curriculum Revision Committee did a masterful job with feasibility studies. When it came to the final vote of the Faculty Assembly, everyone was very well informed on what would happen to schedules, teaching loads, departmental courses, and free time if the Core Curriculum were adopted. The vote was 3-to-1 in favor of Core.

The Core Curriculum in 1981

The focus of the ten successive segments of Core, shows a progression from a centering on the self, to a broader focus on western civilization, to an even broader global and cosmic perspective in the junior and senior years. The content of the Cores and the invitation to value commitment do significantly enlarge and deepen as the student goes from freshman to senior year. In Core 1, the focus is quite clearly the Self in 20th century America; Cores 2 through 4 broaden that perspective to include the origins, development, and recent condition of The West; with the junior year of Core students are invited to cope with the concepts of Cosmos and Spaceship Earth; and in Cores 9 and 10 questions of ultimate meaning and deepest commitment are treated, the Alpha and Omega of human existence and our Ultimate Concerns. A symbol for this broadening of awareness is the "opening wedge" diagram, shown at right.

Another way to discover what general education means at Saint Joseph's is to find out how the faculty actually work within the structures just described. Since the content of each semester of Core is a consensus statement worked out by all the faculty assigned to that particular Core, the agreed-upon content provides insight into institutional, rather than individual, concepts of liberal education. The following five points emerge as content objectives in a brief overview of what the faculty cover in the ten segments of Core.

1. Self-knowledge (Core 1—6 credit hours). The Core 1 faculty aims at helping students answer the question: "Who am I as a man or woman of 20th century America?" Literature, sociology, and psychology are probably the dominant disciplines, with important contributions from history, religion,

the arts, and economics. Core 1 starts with World War I, to try to get students to see how their own worldview has been shaped by their grandparents and parents; we have all been through a process of socialization, and an important dimension of liberal education would be to become aware of that process as it has operated in one's life. From that point on, an attempt can be made to begin to work out one's own identity, freely and creatively, as a person situated in this nation, in one sex, in one racial group, and in a particular economic class.

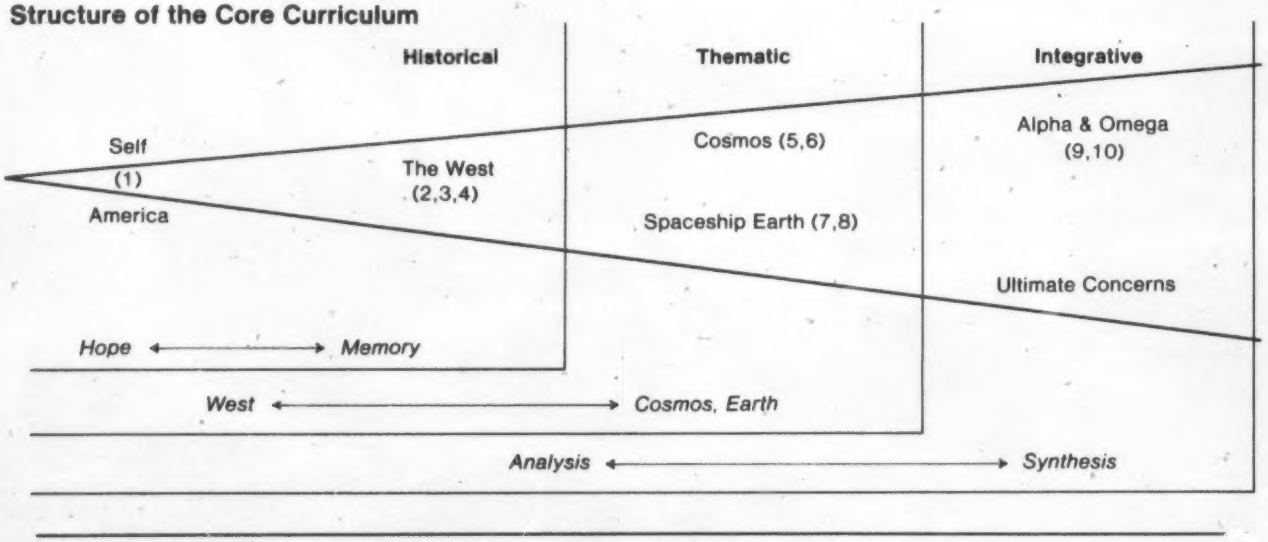
2. History (Cores 2, 3, and 4—18 credit hours). The faculty judges that keeping in touch with the cultural heritage of western civilization is a very important part of liberal education. Fully 40 percent of the Core Curriculum is dedicated to tracing the roots of our ideas, values, and institutions in the historical development of the West from Judaeo-Christian and Graeco-Roman origins, through the Middle Ages, and into the stormy Age of Revolutions of the Modern Age. The interaction in the faculty planning groups seems to guarantee that the organization of each of the three semesters, though centered on a historical-chronological ordering of materials, remains interdisciplinary.

3. Science (Cores 5 and 6—6 credit hours). The classical seven liberal arts included science and Cardinal Newman insisted on science being part of a liberal education, so it was an influential component in our classical and Catholic traditions. The line-up of topics for the two semesters of Core Science follows an evolutionary theme, taking the successive levels of cosmic, biological, and cultural evolution as a convenient manner of organizing topics for the program.

4. Cross-cultural Studies (Cores 7 and 8—6 credit hours). Our students come to us with high levels of ethnocentrism and "America first" attitudes. The challenge of this section of Core is the development of global awareness. The program spends a half-semester each trying to get to know the peoples of India, China, Africa, and Japan—their history, their religion, philosophy and art, their way of defining what it means to be human. The practical attitude that "we are all in this together" is an important outcome of the program, but the more liberal outcome might be the informed and even critical realization that the "human" is to be more broadly conceived than the "western." Over the years, the program itself exhibits in its very content and approach a process of development from fascination with the exotic and the different, to a concern for current political and economic events, to a search for deep similarities and complementarities (the "human" as it can be defined and conceived in truly *global* terms).

5. Synthesis (Cores 9 and 10—9 credit hours). The closing 20 percent of the Core Curriculum is given over to explicit efforts to tie together everything that was covered in the first three years of Core and even to set that in some kind of a connected way with what has occurred in the student's major. The unifying theme is that of Christian Humanism, but to emphasize that it is up to the student to do the synthesizing, the faculty chose to call Core 9 "*Toward a* Christian Humanism." The fact that this group of faculty probably changes more readings and more lectures per year than any other testifies that Core 9 is genuinely pluralistic in its conduct, and that the faculty really means to work with students to help *them* work out a personal synthesis of what it means to be

Structure of the Core Curriculum



human and Christian in this world of ours. Philosophy and theology, as synthesizing disciplines by their very nature (epistemologically, that is), probably play the dominant roles, but many other disciplines are worked into the program; a synthesis, obviously, has to synthesize something. This synthesis is theoretical or on the level of principle, but also practical, affective, or on the level of values. Having been exposed to a wide panorama of alternative historical and cultural ways of being human, the student is in a position to make value commitments that are enlightened, personal, and systematic. The Core 10 seminars then try to take at least a partial step from the largely theoretical level of academic discussions in the direction of the policy-making activity of corporations, political units, or just groups of people who have authority and responsibility over some sphere of human activity.

Core objectives

Finally, we now have a set of objectives that are clear, comprehensive, specific, congruent with what we do—and that make us "respectable" in management circles. Since, as stated before, these objectives grew out of our doing of Core for seven or so years, there is a high level of faculty consensus on and commitment to these six objectives. I think they do state very well both what our structures of general education can accomplish and what we want to accomplish in the Core Curriculum.

1. *To develop cognitive and communication skills.* The Core faculty has accepted a major responsibility for the development of basic skills. Right now, there are some interesting, exciting, and imaginative plans being worked out to finish implementing an eight-semester program of skills development that is *comprehensive* (in a pedagogically appropriate order), *hylomorphic* (when the skill or "form" fits content), *integrated* (treats thinking, listening-speaking, and reading-writing skills together), and *creative* (incorporates more challenging assignments for superior students).

This approach has the great advantage of being a powerful remedy for recidivism, the propensity of students to fall back into the same old errors and bad habits the semester after their speech and composition courses are over. We have as many faculty as possible, and for as long as possible, involved in working at student skills development. This approach also avoids artificial separation between form and content, as well as between one skill and the others.

Having been exposed to a wide panorama of alternative historical and cultural ways of being human, the student is in a position to make value commitments that are enlightened, personal, and systematic.

2. *To build a community of seekers after truth.* The original objective of setting up a common academic experience for all students has, of course, been achieved by requiring the 45 hours of Core of every student. The involvement of the faculty has reached a level of 87 percent, with 60 percent of the full-time faculty teaching in Core for some part of their workload and another 27 percent coming in from time to time to give a lecture in Core on some point of expertise. The community dimension shows up among students in that there are always books, lectures, ideas, and issues that our students have in common, no matter what their individual majors might be. Conversations of an "academic" nature do occur in the residence halls and in the dining room.

There is also a slightly different relationship that grows up between faculty and students in the Core discussion groups, on the one hand simply because of the nature of the discussion approach to content and the implied active role of the learner, on the other hand because faculty often have to adopt the posture of a co-learner or a master learner when the topic comes from outside their specialty.

3. *To expand awareness to the many dimensions of reality.* Quite a few of the faculty are persuaded of the model of person that comes out of contemporary existential phenomenology. Human consciousness is "intentionality," a dynamic going out of self toward world, others, God. One of the objectives of Core is to strive to make the student's undergraduate experience one in which as many doors are opened as possible for him or her. It's the opening wedge symbol that was presented earlier. It seems important to us, as far as liberal education is concerned, to open students up to the full range of human endeavor, to as broad a sample of human achievements and challenges as possible; to be "catholic" as well as Catholic. This would be Core's constant interaction with and challenge to the specialization that occurs in the major.

4. *To cultivate the integrative habit of mind.* These words are taken directly from Cardinal Newman, and they formulate the requirement that liberal education impart a "connected view" of things. To venture once again into the domain of phenomenology, we endorse a whole range of intentionalities as valid. We recognize that the autonomy of each discipline inevitably brings with it some greater or lesser degree of limitation. Therefore, no discipline or department is superfluous, none invalid, and none by itself sufficient. The very structuring of the 10 segments of Core pays hommage not only to an interdisciplinary approach but also to the task of trying to connect things up with one another. Whether in seeking information or accosting specific problems, we would like to see our graduates (and our faculty first!) have a fine sense of the complexity of issues, of the value of the points of view from several relevant disciplines, and have well enough developed interdis-

ciplinary skills to pull it off! Since the "real world" doesn't respect many (any?) of the barriers that we draw between departments in academe, this attitude would seem to be quite the opposite of an "ivory tower" one.

5. *To evoke formulation of, enthusiasm for, and commitment to values.* Liberal education, if it is not to be purely cerebral, if it is to try to be an education of the whole person, must involve development of students' values. This would represent a logical follow-up to the preceding objective, in that it is integration of heart and head, of practice and theory. Another important point of pedagogy that the opening wedge diagram also symbolizes, in addition to a broadening of awareness, is an increasingly challenging invitation to decenter one's attention from the self and to enlarge it to encompass all of humanity and even the cosmos. The synthesizing efforts in the senior year of Core include generalizing and systematizing one's values.

6. *To witness to specific Christian values.* The U.S. Constitution recognizes that institutions, as well as individuals, have the right to a point of view. Phenomenology asserts that no one has a perspectiveless opening to reality. We freely admit that this academic community plants itself squarely within the circle of believers who call themselves Catholic Christians and we begin our search for truth from a place within the Judaeo-Christian traditions. If we are open and frank and conscious of this perspective, there are good chances that we will overcome whatever restrictive biases there may be to it. But the transcending of bias would seem to require that perspective or point of view be recognized to begin with.

What we think we've learned

Saint Joseph's College was one of the 14 participants in the FIPSE-sponsored project called "Examining the Varieties of Liberal Education" in 1979-80. As a result of that grant, we were able to conduct thorough studies of what happens to our students as they progress through the 10 segments of Core from freshman to senior year. On the basis of that project and all the other evaluations of Core over the years, and from faculty as well as student points of view, we think that we have the data and the arguments to back up the following four points.

• *General education involves much more than skills development and much more than a series of introductions to everything.* We have succeeded in blending the vocational and instrumental goals of college education with liberal education. Students are most explicit and emphatic in their opinion that the quantity and the variety of assignments in Core do promote skills development. Our efforts at development of thinking, listening-speaking, and reading-writing skills are long-term (eight semesters) and non-artificial (skills are related to content). In similar fashion, the methodology of a particular discipline is the subject of study when it can contribute to the task at hand.

• *Graduate education doesn't have to be the model for undergraduate education; general education can be interdisciplinary and integrative without ceasing to be higher education.* We have succeeded in blending specialization—the major—with liberal education—Core. The overall undergraduate experience at Saint Joseph's is based on an epistemology that is significantly different from the culturally predominant view of the pursuit of knowledge. If this epistemology is valid, then our Core Curriculum is first-rate intellectual endeavor, albeit of a different mode from that in graduate school. Our claim is that this interdisciplinary and integrative approach to learning is *more* realistic, less artificial, than a narrowly specialized approach. One of our prime objectives in Core is to "cultivate the integrative habit of mind," and students both perceive this and tell us that it works. Core has a different and even a more useful—broader, more imaginative, subjective as well as objective—cognitive style than the major.

Our claim is that this interdisciplinary and integrative approach to learning is more realistic, less artificial, than a narrowly specialized approach. One of our prime objectives in Core is to "cultivate the integrative habit of mind" . . .

• *General education pursues not only breadth but also depth in its own distinctive objectives.* Once general education, and perhaps even all of undergraduate education, has declared its independence of the graduate school model of the pursuit of knowledge, it can formulate its own autonomous set of objectives. Even then, it is often said that general education must sacrifice depth in order to gain breadth. Our experience, however, tends to refute that glib and facile identification of "deep" with "narrow" and "broad" with "shallow." If you consider for a moment that what passes for "deep" in a lot of specialized disciplines is nothing more than detailed bits of information about ever-narrowing perimeters of inquiry, then "deep" doesn't have the connotation of being so virtuous and precious. If, however, we grant a Core Curriculum a distinctive set of objectives, and if among those objectives we find the pursuit of insights into the essentials of human existence—historically, globally, metaphysically—then such a program pursues both depth and breadth! What it pursues are insights into the very heart of what it means to be human, insights which therefore apply to *all* facets of human life and to the position of the human phenomenon in the universe. Why can't "broad" also be "deep"? Integration or coherence in the curriculum is, I think, the key to joining together those two terms.

• *General education can be intellectually and personally challenging and thus promote growth for both faculty and students.* John Dewey is supposed to have said that "there is one kind of co-education that everyone believes in—that of teacher and student." This applies to one of the great benefits of the structures of our Core Curriculum: Since faculty often have to lead discussions on materials which come from outside their own specialty, they are frequently put in the role of a co-learner, although a more mature one, with their students. For the most part, faculty at Saint Joseph's are enthusiastic about this. They find that they acquire a new slant on their own discipline, they change the way they teach, and they even learn new things—in general they say that "Core keeps us sharp!" Students also, perceive their own growth. Seniors are able to distinguish clearly between the impact of Core on them and that of their major or that of normal maturation. Skills development, self-confidence, expanding of awareness, and simply being a broadly educated person are the dimensions of growth that they attribute to Core.

Conclusion

The stress all through this essay has been not just on interdisciplinary but more especially on *integrative* general education. My own inspiration for the commitment to an integrated curriculum stems mainly from Newman's *Idea of a University* and his definition of the liberally educated mind as one that has a "connected view of things." Thus, I was very happy to see Boyer and Levine take the position in their recent essay, *A Quest for Common Learning* (p. 52), that "seeing 'the connectedness of things' is the goal of common learning." But a couple of qualifications or cautions are in order—cautions against "Hegelian excesses" of integration, cautions against devaluing expertise and specialization. I guess I want it both ways: Specialization is good, and it is fragmentation of knowledge that is bad. So we strive at Saint Joseph's College to reward both scholarly efforts in one's field and collaborative, interdisciplinary, integrative work in the Core Curriculum. Our experience has been that one's teaching *and* one's scholarship are enhanced by that interaction.

If I've learned a lot from Newman, I have also lent a very sympathetic ear to Camus in *The Myth of Sisyphus*. Human experience is also well populated with discontinuities, disjointedness, the non-rational, the un-conscious—true absurds. For just one example, we have the presence of both the international arms race and world hunger. The best way that I have found to cope with this, both personally and curricularly, I can express in a rewording of a formula that comes from Albert Einstein: "Integrate as much as *possible*, but no more than that!"

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An Integrative Program for Building Skills: The City and The Self

Susan Gurewitsch

Using the city of New Haven as a focus, Albertus Magnus College gives freshmen an opportunity to build skills such as observation, synthesis, and problem-solving, along with reading and writing.

I am a fugitive from the English Department. Although I am the chairman of that department at Albertus Magnus College, my greatest accomplishment in that position has been abolishing freshman English, a year-long course previously required of all freshmen. Elimination of freshman English now, when the "back to basics" cry rings throughout the land, may seem suicidal. In fact, however, it freed us to develop a more intensive, skill-based program, now in its first year—The City and the Self: An Integrative Program for Freshmen.

When I arrived at Albertus, five years ago, I joined the staff of a rather traditional freshman English program predicated on teaching patterns of exposition by reading and writing about literature. But by the end of that year we all read the handwriting on the wall: Quite simply, the program was not working. Students developed facility in working with literature, but they admitted confusion about how to translate these skills to meet the writing demands of courses outside the literary arena. The program failed to help them perceive the importance of common-core writing skills for all the liberal disciplines.

Traditional texts, methods outdated

We drew the tentative conclusion then—one that further experience has confirmed—that standard writing texts and classroom methods have outlived their usefulness, at least for our students. They assume a common intellectual heritage, especially of logical processes; but that heritage is not shared widely by contemporary students. We decided to work out another approach, one rooted in what these students do possess: their own human experience and their desire to have and to share further experiences. So we began experimenting to offer the students a forum, in the classroom and on paper, for probing and polishing ways to process and communicate their experiences. To create this comon core of experiences, we would have the students explore a single broad topic throughout the year. As our topic we chose "the city," because the location of the college in New Haven provides a source of direct personal experience accessible to students from the very start. And it is in careful observation and clear description of what is directly and personally experienced that effective writing begins.

Both faculty and students found this new approach superior to freshman English. However, two major problems remained that prompted us to reassess and broaden our efforts. Freshman English traditionally was defined as a writing course, but since skill in writing cannot be separated from skill in reading or critical thinking, we found what was needed was a course dedicated to building a set of intellectual skills.

Our initial efforts also lacked breadth of another kind. We found that students did not fully grasp the fundamental role of these skills in all their intellectual endeavors, in part because the course was pigeonholed in the English Department. We first attempted to overcome this barrier by working with selections from non-literary texts that might illuminate the city of New Haven. But the faculty teaching the course still came exclusively from the English Department so the departmental identification persisted, in the minds not only of students but also of other faculty.

Our new venture, The City and the Self, involves faculty from a variety of disciplines in the process of building several essential intellectual skills. The program rests on two specific goals. Its principal purpose is to develop the skills of careful reading, critical thinking, articulate speaking, and effective writing. Because the materials with which students practice these skills are drawn from diverse disciplines, the course at the same time encourages students to think integratively, to begin to perceive the inter-relatedness of all areas of knowledge within the liberal arts and to understand the relationship

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of all areas of knowledge to the individual. In order to fulfill both of these goals the freshman program consists of two distinct but inseparable parts: a seminar in thought and expression, and a series of components.

Seminar in thought and expression

The seminar in thought and expression assumes primary responsibility for developing the intellectual skills outlined above. Taught by a single instructor throughout the year, the seminar meets three times a week and enrolls a maximum of 20 students, facilitating the regular practice under close supervision that is necessary to the skills-building process.

Each semester of the course has as its goal the development of specific skills: in the fall, skills of observation, description, generalization, and synthesis; in the spring, skills of problem-solving and argument. The skills to be mastered are presented as a series of questions. These questions are stated in terms of "I," to reflect the emphasis of the program on the individual student's active involvement in developing her (Albertus is a women's college) own powers of thought and expression. So, for example, observation skills and description skills are presented via two series of questions—a series of questions of thought, such as, "How do I see the whole object in all its details?"; and a series of questions of expression, such as, "How do I convey the fullness of my sensory experience in words, especially without creating a jumble of words?" The two series of questions constitute a checklist by which each student can monitor her own progress in building her skills. At the end of each segment of the course—that is, when work on description or observation has been completed—instructor and student meet in individual conference to assess together the development of her skills in the specified areas. Throughout the course, then, the student is an active participant; and this active involvement is a requisite for effective skills-building.

A series of components

Of course, skills cannot be built in a vacuum. Students need material with which to practice reading, thinking, speaking, and writing. In The City and the Self we pair the seminar in thought and expression with a series of components—short courses (each six to seven weeks long), taught by faculty members from various disciplines, that provide the material with which the seminar practices its intellectual skills. During the year, each seminar group participates in a sequence of four components—two in the humanities, one in the social sciences, and one in either natural science or mathematics. The structure thus emphasizes the vital role of these skills of thought and expression across the curriculum. And the assignments in the component courses are designed to exercise the skills under study at the moment.

Like the seminar in thought and expression, the components rest on a student-centered approach to education, that is, they stress the active involvement of the student in the educational process. Therefore, they are taught in a lecture-discussion format with the emphasis on discussion. They alternate meeting days with the seminar so that students are immersed in the process of integration and skills-building five days a week throughout the freshman year. The components, moreover, integrate classroom and textbook exploration of the city with direct, personal experience of the urban environment—which must be acquired actively. For instance, the biology component explores the validity of drawing an analogy between the city and a cell. One week students examine cells under the microscope, the next week they visit such city agencies as the police department and the sewer plant to see how the life of the city depends on systems similar to those of the cell.

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The problem-solving structure of the program as a whole further encourages active student participation. In last spring's planning workshop, the 14 faculty members now teaching in The City and the Self defined the focus of the course just that way, as the city and the self, and agreed that the same three questions should shape each component:

I. What can we and do we learn about the city through X?
II. What can we and do we learn about ourselves in relation to the city through X?
III. What can we and do we learn about the tensions among the responsibilities of self to self, of self to city, and of city to self through X?

The philosophy underlying this structure is that the shared attempt to solve these problems of the relationship between the city and the self promotes a sense of intellectual community among students and faculty in which students can and will want to participate. Adhering to the same intellectual structure throughout all four components facilitates integration of the courses for students and faculty alike by providing a set of common, recurrent issues for study.

The component sequences

As we began to discuss in the planning workshop the contents projected by individual instructors for their various com-

ponents, we realized that inherent thematic affinities sorted the components into two distinct clusters. Our planning then concentrated on highlighting and strengthening these affinities in order to develop two different sequences of components. Each sequence involves humanities, social science, and either natural science or mathematics in patterns simple enough to permit freshmen to perceive their relatedness and, even more important, their common reliance on the intellectual skills that constitute the core of the program.

The first sequence of components—involving history, sociology, mathematics, and art history—approaches the topic of the city and the self by exploring the city in time (past, present, future), with special attention to how the city at a particular time fulfills or fails to fulfill the needs of its people.

The second sequence—involving French (in translation), biology, psychology, and English—investigates images of the city, specifically, images of the impact of city on self and of self on city. Each student selects one of these two year-long sequences of components and the seminar in thought and expression attached to it.

Integration through a seminar project

Responsibility for making the integration of the four components in the sequence happen for the student rests primarily with the instructor of the seminar, who must also integrate those contents into the skills-building process. Each semester the seminar culminates with a project requiring the student to integrate the intellectual skills introduced and the materials of the components into one seamless whole. For example, in the sequence exploring images, in which I teach, the culminating project will investigate the images of such city institutions as the Yale Repertory Theater, the Food Co-op, and the New Haven Historical Society in order to consider the relationship between the popular image of an institution and its actual structure and functions, and then to tackle the problem of how that image might be enhanced, either by being made more accurate or more positive or by being publicized more widely or effectively. This project will give the student the opportunity to demonstrate her understanding of the central concepts developed in all four of the components, plus her mastery of the skills involved in problem-solving and argument.

The opportunity for faculty dialogue offered by The City and The Self was a crucial factor in attracting broad faculty participation in the design and implementation of the program

Launched by the need for faculty dialogue

Quite a complex program, The City and the Self. For a small college like Albertus, it represents a mammoth undertaking, in which 40 percent of the full-time faculty, over half of them department chairmen, are participating. Such broad and enthusiastic faculty involvement is not easy to secure in a school where everyone teaches four classes every semester, often requiring four preparations, and where the small number of faculty members coupled with the large number of committees and the serious commitment of the college to individual attention for every student imposes heavy demands on faculty time and energy. But, ironically, this very smallness launched The City and the Self at Albertus.

The proposal originated in the English department as a logical extension of the increasingly integrative freshman English course, but its call to establish a skills-building program involving as many different departments as possible answered a deep need of the college that is common to such small institutions—the need for faculty dialogue. Like most liberal arts colleges, Albertus always has been organized along departmental lines, and faculty always have identified themselves as members of particular departments. Yet that identification is not conducive to real conversation in a college composed of so many departments having only one or two members. The opportunity for faculty dialogue offered by The City and the Self was a crucial factor in attracting broad faculty participation in the design and implementation of the program.

Equally crucial was the realization among faculty that students' skills needed more help than freshman English alone could provide, and that faculty did not feel competent to address the problem. The faculty development activities attached to The City and the Self promised to help faculty in any field develop competence in student-centered education and skills-building.

Elements of success

Unfortunately, such faculty development is both expensive and necessary to the success of an integrative venture like The City and the Self. Albertus was fortunate in receiving a National Endowment for the Humanities grant that financed a three-week planning workshop last summer and released time this year for participating faculty to visit other classes in the program and confer with one another. I feel certain that such faculty development activities are essential to introducing integrative education into an institution. How to finance this faculty development is the question second in importance only to the question of whether any faculty members are willing to participate in these activities and the program to which they belong.

But the successful implementation of such a program also demands institutional commitment by the administration and the students of the college. As Jerry Gaff so wisely counsels, it is illusory to expect the program to work really well the first time: "The first time that courses, programs, or services are offered, even on a permanent basis, program implementers might aid their mental health by conceiving of the offerings as

a trial run with the goal of improving the operation on succeeding trials.* Embarking on that first trial run is made much easier for the faculty by the knowledge that the college administration is committed to the necessary subsequent trial runs. Certainly the Albertus faculty rejoiced when the administration volunteered a three-year trial of The City and the Self.

Finally, no curriculum reform is likely to succeed unless it is conceived and developed for a particular student population. Our confidence in The City and the Self is bolstered by the knowledge that it evolved over several years in response to the needs of a given student body. And the program has been fortunate in its own freshman year to be offered to a class of patient, thoughtful, and frank students whose comments on the fall semester have proven invaluable for further faculty planning of this spring semester and of the second trial run next year. The freshmen see in the program where we have not always integrated discipline-based contents and skills-building activities fruitfully; where sometimes attention to the city has made us lose sight of the self; and where our concentration on integrative planning has more than once outweighed care in grading uniformly throughout the program. But these problems of the maiden semester are being addressed through a thorough evaluation process.

Without such careful monitoring of what the program actually is achieving and where it needs help, real integration—of diverse liberal disciplines with each other and with the building of a broad range of intellectual skills—cannot occur. And it is that very complex integrative partnership Albertus is forging in The City and the Self.

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* Jerry Gaff, "Avoiding the Potholes: Strategies for Reforming General Education," *Education Record*, 61 (Fall 1980): 59.

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